

CONTENTS OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

[*The Reader and Binder should be informed, that the Printer has committed a great Blunder in the paging of this volume, at Page 390, by beginning again with 290, and repeating all the Numbers between. The Error has rendered it impossible to make a proper Index, but the Reader will find the Articles under the one or the other of the double Numbers.*]

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DEDICATION.

TO SIR ROBERT GIFFORD, KNT.

HIS MAJESTY'S ATTORNEY-GENERAL. (PRO TEM.)

MY CONSTANT AND VERY LEARNED FRIEND,

BETWEEN you and the Vice Society, I am at a loss how to pay my little courtesies so as to make a distribution satisfactory to both. I feel some little alarm, lest my motives be misconstrued, and a jealous imagination arise, that I am more attentive and grateful to the one than to the other. As far as my professions and protestations will avail any thing, I beg to assure you, that I have made an equal division of my gratitude for past favours, and should any future partiality arise on my part, it can only correspond with greater favours conferred by the one party than the other. You, Sir Robert, I believe, are anxious to outstrip the members of the Vice Society, for whilst they have never meddled with more than one number of the Republican, you, I believe, have encouraged the sale of upwards of a dozen.

You acted nobly with the first volume, but I must say that I considered you negligent with the second volume; and I was, in the spring of the present year, almost ready to tax you with ingratitude, under the idea that you neglected me because I was in prison. I began to despair when I found the third volume complete without being noticed by you, and after having passed nearly through the present volume, I resolved to finish it and then stop the work in its present shape. Whether you had heard my resolution or not, or whether I was too impatient, and overlooked the tremendous

affair you had in hand, in conjunction with Majocchi, Sacchi, Cuchi, Rastelli, De Mont, Liverpool, Eldon, Lauderdale, and George the Fourth, I am at a loss to say, but now it is too late, you are come forward to assist me. You have now announced to me that you have filed an Information against the 8th No. of Vol. 3, and against the 3d, 4th, and 13th numbers of the present volume, with some others, the particulars of which I have not yet heard. I am sorry that we did not understand each other better before, as after having come to a resolution, I never change, but I will endeavour to do business with you in some other way, I have resolved to discontinue this periodical work, and as your late Act of Parliament does not affect any cheap writings, unless they have a title and are published periodically, for the short time you have to remain in office I shall return to the *two-penny trash style* of writing and publication. I had this method in my eye in January last, but I then thought, that if I relinquished the style and title of "Republican," it would be imputed to me as fear, or being humbled by imprisonment, and I resolved to go on for a time, to convince both my friends and my enemies that imprisonment can make no alteration for the worse in my mind, I trust that I have now done enough to convince both that I am an unchangeable being, and therefore, I have less hesitation in commencing the campaign of 1821 with a new mode of warfare.

It is not my intention, Sir Robert, to change the character or appearance of an iota of my principles, and your principles; therefore, I would entreat you not to be dissatisfied, but to favour me with just the same attention as if I was going on with the 5th volume of the Republican. My whole and sole object is to produce a greater effect; an object which I feel assured you will pronounce meritorious.

As it is the practice of all authors who write upon any specific principle, to dedicate their works to some distinguished individual who is known to be the patron of such principle, so also I, knowing that you are the secret admirer of Republican and Deistical principles, have taken the liberty to

place this work under your patronage, and to pay you the usual compliment of a dedication. Your distinction is too great to authorize me to adopt the vulgar method of writing dedications; I feel that I shall do the greatest justice both to your private and public virtues, by saying nothing about them, as a dumb eloquence often produces an effect quite as theatrical as that which is ever so boisterous. I consider, that I shall best display your manifold virtues by a delineation of the principles of the "Republican," of which I have made you the patron, quite to your liking, I flatter myself. The "Republican" might be said to comprise two distinct principles, although the eye of reason might unite them, which I shall now lay before you, under the denomination of anti-monarchical and anti-idolatrous, or in their common acceptation of Republican and Deistical.

By the term anti-monarchical or republican, I mean where the sovereignty of a nation is vested in the people instead of an individual. This is a principle as important as truth and reason, for it cannot be called civilization or a social state, where an individual makes ten, twelve, or twenty millions of people bend to his will, inclination, and caprice, whatever may be his vices, and from which they can find no relief but in his death. Such a state of society is a disgrace to the present age, and evinces a slavish brutality not at all consonant with the common cant and boast of civilization. It is evident in this country, at this moment, that all the incorrupt part of the community is struggling to emancipate itself from this degradation. It is seen that nothing but the representative system of government can confer a dignity on a civilized society, and support the progress of its moral virtue. It is as often seen to retrograde as to advance, under an absolute monarchy, and such a disease in the body politic can no longer be tolerated.

To assist in working this emancipation has been my object in writing the Republican. I have overlooked all dangers and obstacles, under the idea, that the first and greatest object was to impress the minds of my countrymen with the

real character of the monarchy under which they live, and that when they saw it clearly, nature would point out the means of delivery. The timid have charged me with violence, but I have looked beyond the present moment, and I feel assured that whoever shall read the pages of the Republican two or three years hence, will see nothing violent in them, and nothing asserted but what shall then be found to be true. It is altogether a work of principle, and will be thought better of as a knowledge of the value and advantage of those principles increases. It has met the opposition of all parties and all factions, that is to say, all but the sincere advocates of the representative system of government. For the man who has this object in view, is not a party man, he identifies himself with the interest of his country, and looks to that alone. I feel this satisfaction, that I have flattered no man, or no party; neither have I troubled myself about obtaining the approbation of any individual, or any party: I have taken the straight forward line, and to the best of my ability have advocated the republican principle of government, which principle I have felt assured, must necessarily abolish superstition, as far as possible; and disown or prevent all persecution, or even interruption, for matters of opinion. Where opinions are restrained there must consequently be something wrong in the management of the state, for it is by the operation and clashing of opinions, that correct principles are produced. Besides, nothing is better calculated to prevent improper actions than by giving vent to all opinions. Ill founded opinions would never produce improper actions whilst they were met by opinions of more weight and effect. The good would be certain to prevail over the bad, for the former is a work of nature itself, whilst the latter is but a disease. From the corrupt nature of all the European governments, through all past time of which we have any historical knowledge, we have found every kind of rank delusion in matters connected with religion freely encouraged, whilst every attempt to encourage liberality in the human mind has met with a long and direful op-

position. Its degrees have been obtained but by the continued sacrifice of its abettors, and fanaticism and wickedness have continued to prey upon the best blood of society.

I need say no more, Sir Robert, upon the political principles of the Republican, further than that I think the publication has been well timed, and what is occurring in other countries all round us, has rendered my continuation of the work somewhat unnecessary, as example is more impressive than precept. In fact, from the present situation of this country, I have for some time past had an idea that I should further the cause of republicanism by ceasing to write for a few months, at least, in the same manner and under the same title as at present, because I can clearly perceive, Sir Robert, that you and your coadjutors are working practically and most effectually, in that same line as I have been advancing theoretically. Your efforts to destroy one branch of the monarchy, and that by far the best, have given the Republican an admirable opportunity to play upon the corrupt part, and to exhibit its vicious character. You have encountered the more arduous task, and have left me and others but little more to do than look on, and give you applause; and I hereby, in the name of all the republicans in this Island, return you our thanks, and hope your future efforts will be as unceasing as the past, and equally availing.

It is almost unnecessary for me to attempt to explain the Deistical part of the Republican to you who have been so constant a reader, and so great an admirer of those principles; but as most dedications are intended to enhance the dignity of the patron in the public view, I must not lose sight of this object in the present instance; as I fear that I shall not again find you alive when I have to dedicate another volume: I will therefore make a brief recapitulation. It must have been visible to all the readers of the Republican that a persecution for the publication of Mr. Paine's Theological Works drew me into a defence of Deistical opinions. Without that persecution I should have considered myself the most unfit man living to have undertaken any thing of the

kind. My education, my former situation in life, my means were of that nature that debarred me from a study of the subject, and I am only now beginning to see my way well through it. On this ground I rejoice at my present situation as the best possible to advance my future welfare, and to enable me to combat effectually the remaining superstitions of the age. During my confinement I shall devote every hour to this object that I can spare from my couch, and whilst I go on occasionally to publish my sentiments I find it the best stimulus to study, and the best ground for self-instruction: thus, in some measure, I am both a teacher and a scholar at the same time. I begin to view it as my future business through life, and am far from viewing a competition with jealousy: I wish to see others embark in the same line, as a necessary stimulus to emulation. I find that it excites my energies and attention more than any other object: but I should observe that I include the superstition of monarchy with all other superstitions. There is a political idolatry with as many gradations as that which may be termed religious idolatry: the one is as mischievous to society as the other, and of both I am the enemy.

In recapitulating my Deistical principles I would first observe that the belief of a God, the great creator of all things we behold, has been the first and sole object and origin of all religious worship. I will not here, at this moment, say any thing about those idly supposed emanations from this God or Great Creator, but I will shew as the ground-work of my Deistical opinions, and my reason for combating superstition, that all and every species of public religious worship or idolatry has arisen from one common error. I will shew that it is only by making a progress in science that we can perceive this error fully, that the present state of scientific knowledge is sufficient to authorize the rejection of all printed fables on the subject of religion; that the study of nature is the only theological duty of man, and this not to alone for any real or imaginary offences with the Deity, but to make himself a moral and useful member of society.

To shew that all religion and public worship is idolatry I would thus begin:—Man, by his peculiar organization, is the chief of animals: although not superior in bulk to some, his faculty of speech and reason, and his social connexion, render him superior to all, and by his intellectual powers he can make every other animal subservient to him by tuition or force. He can cage the lion and the tiger, though he durst not attack them in the forest. Thus he is rightly and fairly termed the chief of animals, and the sovereign of the soil which nourishes him. He is the only animal that naturally walks erect, and if we examine the savage and uncivilized tribes of mankind, or even if we examine the uneducated and rustic part of mankind in this island, which is called civilized, we have demonstrable proofs that the faculty of reason which man possesses is the sole consequent of the faculty of speech. The faculty of reason is cultivated solely by rational conversation, by education, and by study, for without these opportunities we find the sagacity of mankind nothing superior and scarcely equal to that of many dumb animals. I am of opinion that every animal would have the faculty of reason if he had the faculty of speech. When a foreigner addresses us in a language we do not understand, we are just like dumb animals to each other, and all communication of ideas or desires must take place by dumb shew, as far as we can comprehend each other, a sort of language common to all animals. Our reason avails us but little, particularly if the language of the foreigner has no assimilation to our own. A man uneducated and solely confined to the culture of the soil, has not the least idea of the nature and method of working metals or wearing apparel, and the time it requires even under instruction to become masters of any particular art is a sure and satisfactory proof that our reason is acquired and not inherent, and proves that man is not more rational than any other animal, but that he is an animal capable of acquiring reason. Hence an inference might be drawn that reason is the source of our happiness and moral welfare, and that a perversion of reason must ne-

turally produce the contrary. And here I come to shew that all our ideas about God and religion are but a perversion of reason.

Man, feeling himself superior to all other animals by his faculty of speech, vainly formed to himself the idea that he was created for some distinct purpose. He vainly fancied that there was something more in his composition than in that of other animals, and in process of time this fanciful idea, this "airy nothing" was called a spirit, and had the honours of immortality attributed to it. The dread of dying, "of falling into nought" soon made this soul or spirit the counterpart of the body; a something which elevated mankind also to immortality, under the idea that this spirit retained all the sensitive part of the body when sensation quitted that body, and that a recollection of all that had transpired in this life, and a recognition of friends would be continued in some other sphere. Some other sphere was fixed upon because none of those fanciful spirits ever made their appearance after the death of the body, and hence the idea of that fanciful place called Heaven, Paradise, or Elysium. I boldly state, and I challenge all the priests and their followers on the face of the earth to shew me the contrary, that man has no more spirit in him than any other animal, and that he dies, rots, perishes, and passes like every other animal (or vegetable substance). It might be fairly asked what sort of sensation would those men feel in their spiritual state who had fallen into the hands of, and had been eaten by, cannibals? Millions of men have perished in this manner, and the act is still continued, perhaps on an average of some hundreds per day. The same observation applies to slaves of all kinds; with what sensations would the slave and his cruel master meet each other in their spiritual state? The idea is ridiculous. Man has no spirit or soul that lives distinct from the body, and where is the priest that durst argue the question with me? if there be such let him stand forward, and let us treat the subject courteously, but boldly, honestly, and manfully.

The next point I have to consider is the various ideas that have been formed upon the word God, and I shall shew that they are all wrong, and that we can form no correct idea of that power we call God, and consequently that as all worship is without any just foundation, it must be all idolatry, and altogether useless and unnecessary as a social institution. But very few societies of men have been found who had not formed some idea of a superior being to man, whom they have fancied must have been the creator of all things. As man has seen nothing, no visible object superior to himself in the animal world, he has generally made his God the simile of himself. This was the case before the book called the Bible was in being; therefore the idea cannot have been borrowed from the book of Genesis, for the Grecians had statues to represent their Gods before the existence of that book. But the idea is monstrous to assimilate that great power which sways all nature to the puny and reptile figure of the human body! It is a singular fact that if the word blasphemy can have any distinct meaning or application, it must belong to those who are so much in the habit of throwing it off upon others, because they may dissent from a particular religion or from all religion. If the word blasphemy be a proper word for use, it must belong to those who make the Deity such an oddity, by giving him the human shape and something worse than human passions. It is monstrous to apply the word to me, because my whole and sole object has been to elevate the mind of man, and to shew him that the God about which he talks so much and knows so little, is far above human comprehension; therefore he should not be made the subject of any human comparisons. I can say what God is not, but I cannot say what God is. I can say that all attempts to say what he is are preposterous, and that God is a power beyond the human ken and idea. When we can reach the true cause of our existence, then we shall be able to form some idea of the Creator of that cause, and not before. I boldly state that every thing which is written in books, in the name of God, or about God, is all fiction and

founded in error. Man by his reasoning powers can trace many effects to their causes, but many remain which he has not traced, and this, in my opinion, is the proper business of man; after providing for his bodily wants he should employ himself to improve his reason, which can only be done by exercising it on proper objects. This can be the only true worship of any superior power, because this is the only true acknowledgment of that power. All religionists prescribe to their God or Gods a certain figure and certain attributes, generally making him or them the simile of themselves, and then they arrogantly assume the right to dictate to this God or Gods what is necessary to be done for the gratification of their earthly desires! This is all idolatry, for it matters not whether we mould the figure of our God with our hands or in our mind. It is one and the same thing, and both are wrong. The great controlling power of nature is at present beyond our reach: science has not yet unfolded it to our minds: but it becomes our duty to make every possible search to know it; and this duty I take to be the only true religion: the only necessary system of worship. Again I challenge any priest or his follower to shew me the contrary, and I will pledge myself to refute all the arguments he can advance.

I come lastly to shew, that the present state of scientific knowledge is sufficient to authorize the rejection of all those books which are called holy. Astronomy by the use of the telescope, has taught us that the globe of matter on which we exist, is but one among a million others, which are visible in the regions of space, and all apparently guided by the same unerring laws. The old idea that the sun is a globe of fire is now rejected, and it is proved to a certainty, that its composition is the same as that of the earth, and all other orbs, and that it produces animal and vegetable substances in the same manner as all other orbs are believed to produce them. The cause of the light and heat we derive from the sun is not yet discovered, but I venture to hazard an assertion, that it arises from the quantity of Galvanic or Elec-

tric fluid which flows from such an immense body and forms an atmosphere different from those which surround the smaller orbs of the Moon, and Earth. It is a painful reflection to think, that the great body of Philosophers, who devote their time to the study of astronomy and chemistry, should so far bend to the superstitions of the day as to suppress their better knowledge of the error and falsehood of those superstitions. Dr. Halley, I believe, has been the only English Astronomer who ventured to decry those superstitions, and I am not aware of one chemist who has been “bold enough to be honest, and honest enough to be bold.”

When we read the Mosaic account of the creation, when we read of Joshua and Isaiah stopping the course of this planetary system of which we are a part, when we read of Paul and Mahomet travelling into different heavens, astronomy compels us to receive it all as fiction, and to reject the books, which contain such nonsense, with contempt. All the pretended appearances of Gods, Angels, and Ghosts, are now known to be as many fictions, and still, in spite of our better knowledge, we are subject to penal laws, for not paying respect to that which our minds irresistibly hold to be falsehood, and disgraceful to the age and the advanced state of scientific knowledge. Sir Isaac Newton was as great a fanatic as a mathematician, but he began to suspect those holy books, and from a bigoted Calvinistic christian he verged into Socinianism before his death, which at that time amounted to heresy and blasphemy. If the mind of Sir Isaac Newton had been free from superstition in his youth, he would have made a much greater progress in his astronomical discoveries. Simple as are those few observations, I advance them as sufficient to reject all pretended holy books, words of God—inspired writings, and all such nonsense.

And now, Sir Robert, you will say that in recapitulating the principles of the Republican, I have made a Preface as well as a Dedication: but it should be recollected that we despise all established customs that are not founded in good reason. I am sure that you will never be ashamed of this

epitome of my principles, on which you were so ready to bestow your patronage. In taking leave of you under the title of "The Republican," I return you my thanks for all favours conferred upon it, and I now dedicate the whole of the four volumes to your patronage. They contain principles and statements which I shall never be ashamed of, as I have studied to give them a foundation in nature. I shall re-assume the publication immediately when I can send them through the common channels of publication, and my chief motive for dropping it is, that under the present system no vendor can sell it without the risk of a prison or exile. I may have occasion again to address you, but in the mean time I must inform you that I have an admirable defence for Mrs. Carlile, against your Ex-officio Information for the protection of tyrants and tyranny; and the way I advise Mrs. C. to make her defence is to print it at once, as it is a folly either for you or me to observe common rules.

I am, Sir Robert, in dutiful remembrance,

Your faithful Supporter,

R. CARLILE.

Dorchester Gaol, Dec. 25,

Christi Missa Dies, 1820.